

Compilation of Email and Written Comments
Received by Facilitation Team (June 6, 2005 – July 5, 2005)

My wife and I live in Hanalei on the island of Kauai. I would like to give you a brief background of our history in Hanalei before I address the subject of vacation rentals. We first visited Hanalei in 1969. Bought our first piece of property in 1973 and built a vacation home in 1979. We sold that home in 1985 to buy the property we currently live on and built a house there in 1988. My wife and I were both teachers and we spent part of every summer in Hanalei since 1975. In order to afford a second home we long term rented the houses until 1997 when we switched to vacation rental. We moved here full time in June 2002. We think Kauai is a very special place and love living on the north shore.

On the subject of vacation rentals we are not opposed to their existence. We certainly benefited from being able to rent our home. Some of the issues that need to be addressed and controlled are; 1) Number of occupants allowed in a property at any given time (12 to 20 seems a bit excessive), 2) Number of vehicles and off street parking per residence (obviously tied to the above), 3) Number of lock out units or separate dwellings on a single property (on some properties designed for a single family residence or perhaps an ohana unit there are as many as four units), and 4) How many kitchens should be allowed per property. All of the above affect our environment by taxing septic systems, creating excessive noise, and compromising the positive aspects of a residential neighborhood. Most vacation rentals are very appropriate. These dwellings either have on site owners and/or limit the number of occupants.

A good starting point might be some sort of vacation rental registration process that identified all such dwellings as well as providing information about their physical characteristics.

Good luck with your study of vacation rentals. It is a very important issue and definitely needs guidelines, controls, and monitoring in order to maintain the quality of life that we enjoy on Kauai.

Aloha, I would like to share some thoughts regarding the issue of short-term vacation rentals, operating outside of what are referred to as V.D.A.s. The term comes from a process from the mid-seventies that's intention was to designate the area's of Poipu and Princeville as visitor destination area's, it's purpose was to limit large scale tourist development from being built in residential neighborhood. Now 30 years later there are various opinions as to how the V.D.A.s relate to our current times, and particularly in relation to the short term vacation rentals by private homeowners outside of the V.D.A. area's. Therefore, a dialogue and process are underway with the objective of establishing some guidelines for this segment of our economy.

These short-term rentals represent a very significant portion of our tourist-based economy. One of the main reasons for this success, are that many guests

prefer to stay in these units because they offer a charm and a unique type of experience that appeals to them. There is a misconception by some that these vacation units are what's driving up our current astronomical real estate values when in reality it's a combination of supply and demand being bolstered by greed and speculation that are the forces driving the current market.

Another claim I have heard is that the vacation rentals are taking away all the housing and creating a housing shortage. Well, I have lived here on Kauai for over twenty-five years and housing has been a problem ever since I have been living here, and it's particularly challenging on the north shore. The reason for this is partially due to the fact that most of the homes along the shoreline from Anini to Haena, have been used for the most part, by visitors for many decades. I would say that the colony resort in Haena is a visitor destination. How can you tell homeowners next to the Colony Resort, that they are no longer in a visitor friendly area? This is just one example, many similar situations would exist island wide. It would be a legal nightmare to try to mandate what people can do in their houses, and most of these homes wouldn't be considered as potential affordable housing anyway. The monthly rent would be in the thousands even if they were available for that purpose.

Our local government must address the problem of affordable housing by enacting a firm policy that would require major developer's to allocate a portion of their projects or profits to the housing situation as part of their permitting process. If this would have been done 10 or 20 years ago we wouldn't have such a severe shortage of housing today. I just heard the mayor announce plans to build 700 affordable homes for Kauai residents. This will be a big step towards alleviating our housing shortage. When these homes are built, the people fortunate enough to live in them will need a healthy economy so they can make their monthly payments.

The leaders of this segment of our economy have worked hard to cultivate and develop their business by operating with a high degree of integrity, as well as by providing quality service to their clients; while at the same time being sensitive to the environments they operate within.